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Saving Sashimi: Restocking Bluefin Tuna

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Saving Sushi: Restocking the Population

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Problem

In January 2013, a stock assessment found that the Pacific Bluefin Tuna population decreased 96.4% since the 1960's.

Solution

Establish a tuna hatchery in the East China Sea along the coast of Japan.

Project Goals/Objectives

- Increase tuna population to 10% of the '60's level within 7 years
- Provide sustainable source of fish protein for Japan
- Reduce price of Bluefin tuna (Currently $24 per piece of sushi)

Benefits

- Improve natural reproduction rate
- Reduce fuel and other costs to Japanese fishing fleet
- Maintain biodiversity

Costs

- Starting Cost (est. $625,000)
- Operating cost (est. $520,000)
- Accumulated waste of Bluefin tuna

Method

Obtain funding from Japanese Government or coalition of Japanese fishermen

Work with Japanese fishermen to provide adult tuna for the hatchery

Stock hatchery

Breed tuna and release

Raise fingerling tuna to maturity

Breed adult hatchery tuna and release most males

Repeat cycle

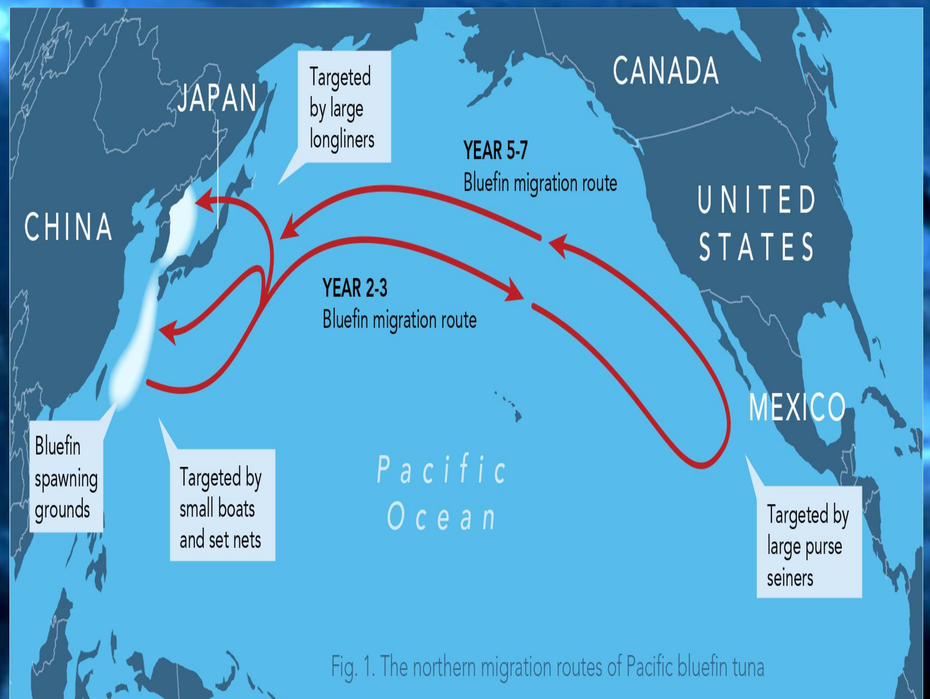
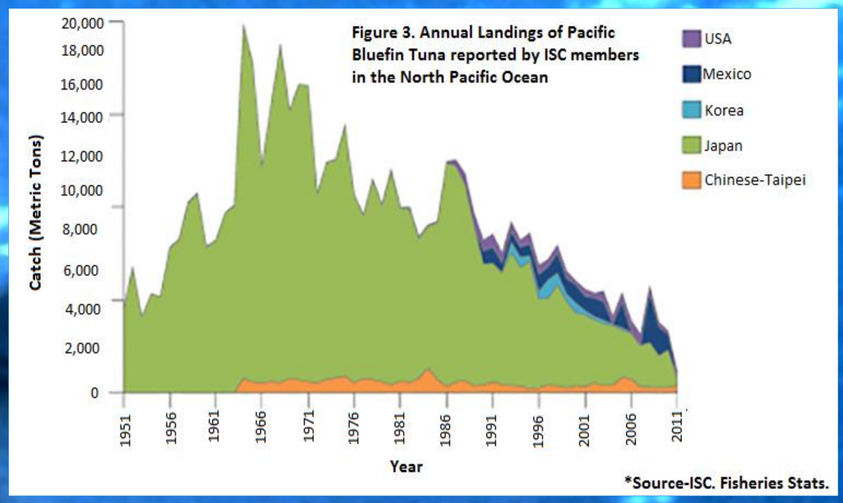


Fig. 1. The northern migration routes of Pacific bluefin tuna



Why Japan?

- **Japan consumes 80% of all Bluefin tuna caught globally (sushi/sashimi)**
- **Bluefin tuna populations around Japan have declined rapidly**

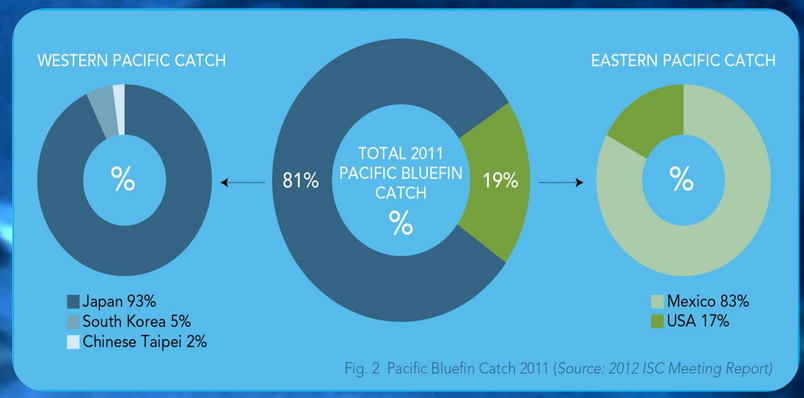


Fig. 2 Pacific Bluefin Catch 2011 (*Source: 2012 ISC Meeting Report*)

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